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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 000631

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [MASS](#) [PHUM](#) [SNAR](#) [KJUS](#) [IR](#) [LE](#) [AR](#)  
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: SUPREME COURT OPENS THE DOOR FOR AMIA  
RETRIAL OF LOCAL CONNECTION

REF: BUENOS AIRES 592 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: AMBASSADOR E. ANTHONY WAYNE FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

¶1. (SBU) On May 27, Argentina's Supreme Court ordered the reopening of the investigation into the so-called "local connection" involved in the 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Jewish Mutual Association (AMIA). The court ruled 4 to 2 that Carlos Telleldin, who was previously acquitted, should be tried again for his alleged role in providing the van that was loaded with explosives that were detonated in front of the community center. In addition, the court's decision upheld the 2004 acquittal of former Buenos Aires provincial police officers accused of facilitating the attack, but opened the door to retrying them on extortion charges. (Note: The former police officers are suspected of having helped protect Telleldin's stolen car parts racket.) Local newspaper of record "La Nacion" pointed out, however, that most of these crimes are already subject to the statute of limitations.

¶2. (SBU) In its decision, the court validated evidence collected in former federal judge Juan Jose Galeano's investigation into the attack until October 31, 1995. (Note: In November 1995, Galeano allegedly offered USD 400,000 to Telleldin in exchange for evidence against the former police officers. After this was discovered, he was removed from the AMIA case in 2003 and impeached in 2005.) The Court determined that only after October 31, 1995 did Galeano cease to be impartial and as such, all evidence uncovered by Galeano after that date would remain inadmissible. The court further criticized Galeano for succumbing to pressures exerted by a local terror network which aided Hezbollah.

¶3. (SBU) News about the decision broke out while the Ambassador was hosting a farewell reception with Argentina's press corps. When asked by the Jewish News Agency Director for a comment on the decision, the Ambassador supported the ruling, calling it "an important step forward" in Argentina's pursuit of justice. He also reiterated the USG's commitment "to work closely with GOA security and intelligence officials to prevent any act of terrorism, violence, and anti-Semitism in Argentina. The Ambassador's statement was carried the next day in Argentina's largest circulation daily "Clarín."

¶4. (SBU) According to the local press, the Argentine Jewish community hailed the decision. The organization, Friends and Family of AMIA victims, said in a statement, "The Supreme

Court is making sure that justice will prevail in the AMIA case. We are filled with hope that the truth will come out and that the culprits will be punished." The same organization sent a message to the Embassy thanking the Ambassador for his comments. AMIA President Guillermo Borger stated that "the Supreme Court ruling opened a ray of hope" that justice will be served.

Comment

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15. (C) The Argentine Jewish community has long considered the 2004 acquittal of Telleldin and former Buenos Aires provincial police officers for their attack as a miscarriage of justice, and have pressed the GOA to right this wrong. In response, the AMIA Special Prosecutor's office has become increasingly focused on the local aspects of the attack as reported in reftels. Despite these efforts, the GOA still has not convicted a single person for the attack, a fact that will certainly not go unnoticed by the Argentine Jewish community on the eve of the 15th anniversary of the attack that left 85 dead, and hundreds more wounded.

WAYNE